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AUTHOR	Gold, Benjamin K.
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ABSTRACT

During the 1969-70 academic year at Los Angeles City College, 1,127 items of financial aid were given to 757 students. The purpose of this report is to present information on the number and types of aid administered, the students receiving aid, and findings of preliminary investigation into their effects on academic performance. The kinds of financial aid considered were those administered under California Senate Bill 164, Extended Opportunity Act of 1969, and specially funded programs. The aid was in the form of loans (12 per cent), direct grants (41 per cent), and various types of jobs (47 per cent). Other data recorded and analyzed include: type and amount of aid, sex, age, race, high-school background, units attempted, units completed, and grade points earned. The findings, which are summarized, suggest hypotheses for future testing. (CA)

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

"ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS, 1969-70"

Research Study #70-12

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Ben K. Gold
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INFORMATION

"Academic Performance of Financial Aid Recipients, 1969-70"

Purpose of the Study

Legislative enactments, both federal and state, within the past several years have provided needy college students with a variety of financial aids. Los Angeles City College students have received a significant share of these aids. The purpose of this study is to present some factual data on the numbers and types of aids, some descriptive data concerning students receiving these aids, and findings of a preliminary investigation into the effects of the aids on the students' academic performance at Los Angeles City College.

Procedure of the Study

Information concerning types of aids, numbers and characteristics of recipients was obtained from the Financial Aids Office, the Placement Office, and the Office of Admissions and Records. Type and amount of aid, sex, age, race, highschool background, and units attempted, units completed, and grade points earned together with withdrawal, probation, or disqualification information, were recorded for each aid recipient on a prepared 4 x 6 index card. Inasmuch as some of the desired information was not available in computer memory, and some of this unavailable information was required relatively quickly for a report requested by the Chancellor's Office, the data were recorded and analyzed manually. The Research Office is indebted to the staff of the Placement Office for considerable assistance in this project.

Procedure of the Study (continued)

Financial aids considered in this study include the following; listed according to coding devised to identify and categorize particular aids:

Code "A": Spring, 1970 aids administered under California Senate Bill 164, Extended Opportunity Act of 1969, (provides $3 million to applying districts for "extended opportunity programs and services to identify, recruit, and retain the underprivileged," Los Angeles City College received $358,000 under this Act).

A-1: Tutoring Aides
Students employed 15 hours per week, at $2 per hour, to work with recipients of grants and Work Study positions, and with other disadvantaged students as needed.

A-2: Department Aides
Students employed 15 hours per week, at $2 per hour, to serve as aides to instructors, department chairmen, coordinators and advisers, providing extended opportunity services for disadvantaged students.

A-3: Student Counseling Aides
Students employed 15 hours per week, at $2 per hour, to perform as paraprofessional counselors, working with recipients of grants and Work Study positions, and with other disadvantaged students as needed.

A-4: Work Study
Students employed 15 hours per week, at $1.65 per hour, performing miscellaneous on or off campus jobs. These aids supplement the federally funded Work Study program (B-3 and C-3 below), and liberalize its economic eligibility requirement.

A-5: Community Aides
Students employed 15 hours per week, at $2 per hour. This program reinforces the district-funded Community Services program with students who had previously been unpaid volunteer workers.

A-6: Grants
Outright grants of $400 to students who qualify for assistance.

Procedure of the Study (continued)

Code "B": Fall, 1969 aids administered under specially funded programs other than SB 164.

B-1: National Defense Education Act (NDEA) Title II Loans.
Loans averaging $300 to help low-income students.

B-2: Economic Opportunity Grants (EOG), Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV-A.
Grants averaging $200 to low-income students.

B-3: Work Study Program, Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Title I-C.
On and off campus jobs for low-income students.

B-4: Nursing Student Loans, Health Manpower Act of 1968, Title II-C.
Loans for needy nursing students.

Code "C": Same as "B" except Spring, 1970 instead of Fall, 1969.

Findings

Under the provisions of the grants described in the previous section, 1,127 financial aids were administered during the 1969-70 academic year to 757 students. The major categories for studying these financial aid recipients included: number of aids received by designated group, number who did not complete the semester during which the aid was received, number whose cumulative grade point average was below C prior to the semester aid was administered, number on probation who failed to make a C average during the semester aid was administered and were thus eligible for disqualification, average units attempted and grade point average for the semester during which aid was received (1st semester if aid received for two semesters), and average units attempted and grade point average for all work undertaken at L.A.C.C. (including semester during which aid was received).

These categories were further analyzed in terms of sex and ethnic background subgroups and length of stay at L.A.C.C. (as measured by units completed). Some "all-college" figures were used for comparison purposes. These figures were estimated from data collected for the Research Studies indicated.

Summary and Conclusions

This study investigates certain characteristics and academic performance of Los Angeles City College students who received financial aid under the provisions of recent federal and state enactments. Aids were in the form of loans (12 per cent), direct grants (41 per cent), and various types of jobs (47 per cent).

During the 1969-70 academic year, 1,127 of these aids were awarded to 757 students. About 58 per cent of these aids went to male students. Almost three-fourths went to minority students, with 46 per cent to Blacks, 18 per cent to Spanish surnamed students, and 9 per cent to Orientals.

Almost two-thirds of the aids considered in the study were administered in Spring, 1970 under California SB 164, with over half of these being in the form of direct grants to students. The remaining aids were administered under various Federal Acts and were about evenly divided between the Fall and Spring semesters.

About 30 per cent of the students received more than one aid. Over two-thirds of these received one additional aid only, with the remainder receiving a total of three to eight aids. Multiple aids were generally combinations of jobs with grants, loans with grants, or continuation of an aid over two semesters.

Several measures were used to provide indicators of the effects of the aids on student persistence and academic performance. The measure for persistence used was the percent of students who did not complete the semester in which aid was received. Conclusions drawn from the use of this measure are the following:

(1) Students obtaining the $400 grant, students working as Tutoring Aides or Counseling Aides, and students receiving Nursing loans stayed through the semester at a rate significantly above that of the overall student body estimate. Students working under Work Study or as Community Aides showed generally higher dropout rates.

(2) No significant differences in dropout rates among various ethnic backgrounds or between sexes is apparent.

In order to estimate effects or academic performance, the following measures were used: percent with cumulative GPA prior to semester of receiving aid below "C" average; percent whose GPA prior to semester of receiving aid was below "C" and who failed to make a "C" average during the semester of receiving aid; semester and cumulative GPA's.

Following are conclusions drawn from these data:

(3) Students receiving aid were generally above the "all-college" estimates on measures of academic performance. About 19 per cent of the aid recipients were "on probation" compared to the all-college estimate of 25 per cent. GPA for the semester of aid receipt was 2.47 for aid recipients, compared with the "all college" estimate of 2.17.

(4) The effect of the financial aid on GPA is not clear, however, as about half of the students "on probation" failed to make a "C" average during the semester of aid, a figure quite consistent with the all-college estimate. Also, comparison of cumulative GPA's indicates relative performance during the semester of aid to be about the same as (or slightly below) "all college" performance.

(5) Among the various aid categories, highest GPA's were earned by Tutoring Aides, lowest by Counseling Aides. Highest semester GPA relative to cumulative GPA was made by students receiving NDEA loans.

(6) Oriental students' GPA was consistently above that of other ethnic groups. No significant differences can be noted between sexes, although the impact of the aid appears to be stronger on the Oriental female than others.

A comparison of units completed shows that half of the aid recipients had completed over 30 units prior to receiving aid. Median number of units completed for this group was 30, compared with the "all college" estimate of 24. Aid recipients with 15-30 units completed performed relatively better than those with less than 15 or more than 30.

This study does not provide, nor could it be expected to provide, conclusive evidence as to the efficacy of administering financial aids to students as far as impact on academic performance is concerned. It does provide some data for comparison purposes and suggests some hypotheses for future testing.